DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 022 509 LI 000 972

CONFERENCE ON LIBRARY SERVICES FOR THE DISADVANTAGED, PROCEEDINGS SUMMARY (HARRIMAN, NEW YORK, DECEMBER 10-11, 1964).

New York State Library, Albany.
Pub Date [64]
Note-26p.
EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.12
Descriptors-CONFERENCE REPORTS, *CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED, *LIBRARY PROGRAMS, *LIBRARY SERVICES, *POVERTY PROGRAMS, PROGRAM COORDINATION, *PUBLIC LIBRARIES
Identifiers-Library Services and Construction Act, *New York

An invitational conference was held to bring together library system staff members immediately concerned with projects financed under the Library Services and Construction Act, representatives from the New York State Education Department, and leaders in related agencies for discussion of: (1) identified needs and projects designed to meet these needs, (2) cooperation and coordination of projects, (3) evaluation techniques, and (4) publicity about the projects. This summary of the proceedings includes descriptions of projects for the disadvantaged in public library systems in the state of New York, along with critiques and comments on these projects. Summaries of remarks by principal speakers are also included, covering the subjects of library participation in the war on poverty, characteristics of the disadvantaged child, and service to the disadvantaged. (JB)

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LI 000972

CONFERENCE ON

LIBRARY SERVICES FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

PROCEEDINGS
SUMMARY

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ARDEN HOUSE
HARRIMAN, NEW YORK
DECEMBER 10 AND 11, 1964

LI 000972

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PROCEEDINGS SUMMARY

Conference on Library Services for the Disadvantaged

Arden House, Harriman, December 10-11, 1964

PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE

Invitational Conference to bring together library system staff members immediately concerned with projects financed under the Library Services and Construction Act, key people in the State Education Department and Library Extension Division, as well as some leaders in related agencies in order to:

- Discuss the various identified needs and description of projects designed to meet these needs
- Discuss possible areas of cooperation and ways to coordinate the projects in an effort to avoid isolation and unnecessary duplication
- Redefine and refine the projects as needed
- Incorporate evaluation techniques into the design of each project
- Publicize projects at all levels and stimulate other library systems to plan for what they might do in this area.

VISUALIZING THE PROBLEM

Film Showings: *SUPERFLUOUS PEOPLE*, a WCBS-TV Public Affairs Documentary; *CHILDREN WITHOUT; HIGH WALL*, and *NEIGHBORHOOD STORY*.

EXHIBITS

1. Background Reading on the Poor and the Problems of Poverty

2. Program of book reading and discussion designed to change attitudes regarding disadvantaged individuals - The Disadvantaged: A Program for Understanding

   This exhibit introduced a booklet outlining a suggested reading-discussion program suitable for library-sponsorship in communities. The aim would be to create understanding of social problems and of the culture of poverty for individuals involved in Community Action Programs and the War Against Poverty.

   This program may be obtained as a separate by writing to: Margaret C. Hannigan, Library Extension Division, New York State Library, Albany, New York 12224.

SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS OF PROJECTS FOR THE DISADVANTAGED
IN PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEMS

Financed by Grants Under the Library Services and Construction Act

Profiles of system projects concerning various programs and planning for the disadvantaged were distributed. Note: these profiles reflect some modifications and developments as of March 1, 1965.

BROOKLYN - "Community Coordinator Project." There are four areas in Brooklyn which are similar in that they have a considerable number of high school dropouts, cultural illiteracy is prevalent and earning power is limited. These elements have been brought about by an influx of immigrants and the banding together of large numbers of particular ethnic groups such as Negroes and Puerto Ricans. The Bedford-Stuyvesant community, one of these areas, was chosen for the pilot project of this experiment.

The unique position of Community Coordinator was established in March of 1961 to supply the need in the Bedford-Stuyvesant community for more than the mere physical presence of a library and a staff to operate it. A librarian was appointed to this position to work full-time in the test community and to make the services of the library a continuing educational force. His prime objectives were to: create an awareness of library services on the part of the community and the people who live in it; promote the importance of the role of the library to community living; generate an atmosphere of library acceptance by encouraging greater use of it.

Through the activities of the Community Coordinator, the administration of the library has made Bedford-Stuyvesant residents aware of the access to education which is theirs. It is apparent, through the people who have been reached in this area, that with adequate training and comprehension of the need to use the tools available, they can be motivated and shown how to make a smooth transition from school to job, how to get into a labor union, how to be the first hired and the last fired. They have been shown the effects of being a burden on the community as opposed to the satisfaction of self-dependence, and have learned that command of language assists in job success and social mobility.

Through the present project, which began December 1, 1964, and will continue for 12 months, the Community Coordinator program is being expanded to serve all four disadvantaged areas. Hardy Franklin has been appointed Senior Community Coordinator. Community Coordinators are Major Owens, Thelma Gipson, and Bessie Bullock, all of whom were appointed from the Brooklyn Public Library professional staff. Library materials identified as especially useful among the disadvantaged are now being purchased.

BROOKLYN - Preschool Program. This yearlong project for disadvantaged preschool children began December 1, 1964. Its purpose is to present specially designed programs for these children in day-care centers, pre-kindergartens in public schools, and branch libraries. The programs are intended to orient and acquaint preschool children with books and reading for their own pleasure and enrichment, and to assist them in becoming emotionally and socially prepared for formal learning experience in school.

Nine college graduates, trained during January, have been employed in the project since February 1. They work 15-25 hours per week, telling stories to 3-4 groups each in approximately 20 locations. A second group of 12 aides, also college graduates, are in training at

present and will begin work around March 15. Followup supervision of all aides is being given by professional personnel who conducted the training sessions.

Programs for parents, to be offered concurrently with those for children, are being developed. All programs are being coordinated with day-care center directors, the Board of Education, and various community groups.

BUFFALO AND ERIE. The library is undertaking a one-year program, starting in January 1965, for the disadvantaged which involves an expansion of service and strengthening of the book collection and staff for the North Jefferson Branch under the supervision of William Miles. This project is to serve as a pilot program for possible application to other depressed areas of the city. Since there are presently no action groups in Buffalo, the library hopes to be organized to offer supplementation by the time other groups are formed.

The project will be set up to deal first with groups, but there are plans to work closely with individuals also. Much work will be done with school classes in the library.

The first priority will go to strengthening the book collection with a heavy emphasis on multiple copies and supporting material. The juvenile collection will be strengthened in all areas and much will be added in the field of Negro history, life and culture. There will be material for illiterates and slow readers, vocational material, especially retraining materials, a good reference collection, multiple copies for school reading lists, armed forces and civil service exams, books on family life, budgeting money, etc., as well as a basic collection for program leaders.

A student work program will be organized, using 10 students to recover overdue materials. There are also plans to work out a cooperative program with the Family Life Services.

A consultant staff will be organized and additional staff will be added to permit librarians to go out in the area to reach the people directly, and a community council will be set up to encourage community participation.

NASSAU. This project will attempt to secure adequate data on who are the disadvantaged in Nassau County, what agencies are currently providing what types of programs, what relationship the library can bear to other agencies' activities, and what implications there are for libraries on legislation enacted or proposed at all levels of government. Studies will be conducted on the school dropout, the adult functional illiterate, the culturally deprived at all age levels, the segregated, the retrainable unemployed, and the handicapped. The need for coordinated information on and a coordinated approach to the problem stems from the dilution of the disadvantaged population over a large number of communities, each with its own library program.

The project was approved for a 12-month period, beginning November 1, 1964. Implementation of the proposals thus far has been delayed due to the inability to hire a project director, despite some 15 possible applicants. Efforts are being stepped up to find a project director.

NEW YORK CITY. Northern Manhattan Library Center Project will establish and demonstrate the value of intensive library service to all age groups in the northern third of Manhattan (New York County) with particular attention to the Harlem region centering in the Countee Cullen Library

which serves a large population including many poor and underprivileged citizens with limited but developing reading ability. The project will test and demonstrate library skills and techniques effective in bringing this socio-economic group into the library to use its materials and services for personal gain and satisfaction. It will train nonlibrarians and evaluate their use to augment and serve within the library program at a level of skill and responsibility commensurate with their academic and vocational training: a) college graduates trained in another discipline but not active in that field; b) college students or those with some college credit but not presently enrolled as students; c) high school graduates in search of a public service career. It will locate and test materials adaptable to the interests and reading level of the neighborhood group and will also develop a variety of programs to enrich and stretch cultural horizons. It will actively cooperate with other nonlibrary groups such as Haryou, the Domestic Peace Corps, and others.

The Countee Cullen Library and the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature and History have maintained for many years services which make this library building the cultural center of Harlem. Financial limitations have required its emphasis to be centered on those who seek its services of their own accord. Residents with limited reading ability have not used the library and have not realized the potential value of its services. The project which will be located in this established center will develop its resources for this group in order to serve all members of the community.

Esther Walls, branch librarian at Countee Cullen, has been appointed director of the project which is expected to begin around April 15 and to continue for 12 months.

PIONEER (Rochester area). This project is concerned with the disadvantaged in the five counties served by Pioneer Library System. It was planned to consist of three phases; research, pilot projects, and inservice training program for staff.

Approval for the project was granted December 1, 1964, for a 12-month period. The major item in the budget is for personnel, consisting of a project director, a special services librarian, and supporting clerical help. For project director, the system has sought a person with good background on sociology and research, since it will be the responsibility of this person to conduct the preliminary research, to plan, direct and evaluate the pilot projects, and to coordinate the inservice training phase. On January 25, Clement Hapeman was appointed. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in sociology, has college teaching experience, and served with the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene.

The special services librarian is to assist the project director and give special effort to assembling and evaluating information and materials helpful in doing the background research, and in implementing the pilot projects. This position has not yet been filled.

Through surveys, interviews, and analysis of available data, this project proposes to determine who are the disadvantaged in the Pioneer area, what are their needs and interests, what agencies are already working with them, and how, and on a nationwide basis, what other libraries are doing to serve the disadvantaged.

Exact form which the pilot projects will take will follow from the research phase findings. Possibilities include supplying reading

materials and guidance in support of Project ABLE, or establishing model career information collections to cooperate with the objectives of the Manpower Training Project.

Through the inservice phase, the project director will provide working knowledge and techniques to staff of the Pioneer Library System, appropriate librarians of member libraries and Rochester Public Library branches, and personnel of other agencies also working on projects for the disadvantaged. Through this, a coordination of outlook and method would be hoped for.

QUEENS. "Operation Head Start" is a new program for preschoolers now underway in 10 branch libraries. Aimed at the 3-5-year-olds from "bookless" homes, the project is an extension of the library's picture book hour program. Its objectives are to introduce children to the joys and pleasures contained in books and to encourage a later readiness for reading when entering school. The project is organized to reach a maximum number of children through the development of daily programs as well as multiple ones in a given day as the need arises. Individual children may attend one session each week.

Parents and interested adults escorting the children are being given an opportunity to make known their own informational needs and on the basis of these specific findings, adult programs will be developed to meet parent requirements.

Borough social, health and welfare agencies are working closely with the library to reach parents of children who may benefit from the program.

For the picture book hours the library has recruited junior and senior college students with special aptitudes for work with children and graduate students in social work. They have been given an intensive two-week training course conducted by the library's children's consultant and including sessions with outside specialists in the fields of child study, parent education, and social work. Thus trained, these aides are now working 20 hours per week each, presenting picture book hours in the 10 branch libraries between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Library materials have been purchased for the project, among them for each branch the list of 75 picture books used in the picture book hours. The collection of each branch has been strengthened further by the addition of $1200 worth of books for lower age levels selected from replacement lists as of special interest to the disadvantaged.

Like other projects in this category, this will be a 12-month program. Its beginning date was December 9, 1964.

PROJECTS PRESENTED BY SIX LIBRARY SYSTEMS

NASSAU COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM - Spencer Shaw

In Nassau County a microcosm has only recently been discovered - the "disadvantaged" behind the wealthy, sophisticated, suburban facade. Already many communities are engaged in projects to help these disadvantaged at all age levels. Libraries must have a role in these projects and the objective of the proposed study with the help of LSCA funds is to reveal this role and then to develop a program for action. To accomplish this we will have a director, an assistant and a secretary; Hofstra and Adelphi colleges will have consulting roles as will Eastman Kodak consultant from Rochester to aid in graphics and communication.

PIONEER LIBRARY SYSTEM - Harold Hacker

Project will need constant evaluation - and will have it. It will identify ways in which the disadvantaged are disadvantaged: socially, educationally, psychologically. It will consider the rural disadvantaged (migrant workers, etc.) as well as city disadvantaged. It will critically examine current nonlibrary programs for duplication of effort, change in methods to fit the times, awareness of what is being done elsewhere.

There will be a review of the library - its policies and programs. How does the library communicate with the disadvantaged? How does it involve these people? Is there a new library role emerging? Is it now too middle-class oriented? The library should be the information center for the whole disadvantaged program.

The project should be self-canceling. The team will not work in a vacuum. Once the dimensions of the problem are known, an action program will follow. The project director will be a nonlibrarian, a sociologist, who, with his assistant, will lead the staff. There will be inservice programs for library staff and staff of other agencies to help them in dealing with the disadvantaged.

BUFFALO AND ERIE LIBRARY SYSTEM - William O. Miles

At present Buffalo has no action groups although some may be in the making. Library project should be organized by the time other groups are organized in order to offer its supplementary services. First priority is to strengthen the book collection in the branch serving highly concentrated group of disadvantaged. Multiple copies and full range of materials needed, especially in these areas: Negro history, life and culture; children's books; materials for slow learners, illiterates; vocational and especially retraining material; multiple copies of school reading list titles; good reference collection; Civil Service and Armed Forces exam and training materials; books dealing with family budgeting and other problems; background material for program leaders of the disadvantaged. Hope to have messengers employed to retrieve overdue books under Student Work Program. Will work with Family Life Services to develop library programs for parents and families. Will need additional staff to work closely with all types of community groups as in Brooklyn.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY - Mrs. Jean Godfrey

Even in 1890, 80 percent of the population was foreign born - mostly poor. In late 1920 and 1930 had an active program at Countee Cullen-Schomburg and at this time testsof library programs were made. Harlem is heavily saturated with all sorts of social agencies - usually well supported financially. Library should not compete, but should know what others are doing and library should supply basic essential of books, particularly for the limited reader. The library should be there when the teaching stops. We cannot teach techniques of reading but we can strengthen techniques after they are acquired. Programs of books in quantity should give cultural impetus and benefit in practical ways.

Disadvantaged need pride of accomplishment, race, country, citizenship. Schomburg Collection can help them but this collection needs strengthening. Should be used by the young adults and children as well as by scholars and agency leaders.

There are 71,000 under 21 years who are dropouts and unemployed. We need to work with these people and hope to set up "cultural programs."

People want someone of their own in the branches they use. This is true in Harlem and in other neighborhoods. We hope to effect some centralization of the program among these branches.

We also hope to develop a nonlibrarian participation - to establish a "Peace Corps" of our own to try to capture their use and their enthusiasm.

QUEENS BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY - Mrs. Ellen Pryor

The purpose of this project is to bridge the gap between the home and the school insofar as reading is concerned. The branches involved in this program serve deprived areas. For fuller description see *Library Journal* for September 15, 1964, p.30-31, Children's Section.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY - Hardy Franklin

The Community Coordinator Program was explained. For fuller description see *Wilson Bulletin* for December 1963, p.349-351 and *Library Journal* for October 1, 1964, p.3689-3693. This program involves three approaches: to the individual, the organization and the institution. Mr. Franklin goes where the people work, where they meet about their problems, etc. He thinks that one of the major barriers to our reaching out to help the deprived is in our personalities and our methods.

The Preschool Program was described by Harriet Quimby. The hypothesis of this program is that contacts with the library will help children do better in school than those who do not have, or have not had, contact with a library. These "contacts" will be achieved at branch libraries and at day-care centers. The professional staff will be expanded but also there will be additional nonprofessional staff.

These will receive a well developed inservice training program and must be college graduates with teaching or social work experience. This program will be integrated into on-going programs at day-care centers and will support social agency and parents' association programs. Work schedules will be kept flexible in order to permit evening assignments.

COMMENTS AND CRITIQUES

Theron A. Johnson, Administrator, Division of Intercultural Relations in Education, State Education Department

Functions of the Division of Intercultural Relations include enforcement of laws concerning discrimination in higher education and steps to eliminate imbalance in school districts.

School people are now finally aware of the social revolutions and of the changing role of all institutions, but there is a danger of stereotyping. The disadvantaged vary as much as any other group.

Leadership does not always exist in boards of education. The most conservative people are often in policymaking positions. There is a fear of the community on the part of school board members and superintendents. They often wish that the Commissioner of Education would order certain things done, which they want done, but do not have the courage to do. Some heresy in education is needed to break through old structures and forms.

We can learn much from voluntary agencies. They seem closer to the needs of people than do schools, libraries and other institutions.

These voluntary agencies might be a good point of contact to involve the disadvantaged in our programs and services.

Mrs. Pauline Targ, Area Director, New York State Division for Youth, New York City

The New York State Division for Youth is the State's delinquency prevention agency.

Since 1945 when the Youth Commission was established, it has provided State-aid in a matching basis to local municipalities for the establishment and/or expansion of local programs in the areas of recreation, youth service and youth bureaus for the prevention and control of juvenile delinquency. This function has continued under the present Division for Youth when the latter was established in 1960 and was given additional responsibilities in the area of rehabilitation. In this connection the division has established and is at present operating 10 Rehabilitation and Youth Opportunity Centers for delinquent and delinquent prone 15, 16 and 17 year-old youth who are referred by the courts as a condition of probation or by public and voluntary agencies in the instance of delinquent prone young people known to them. The Centers include Residential Homes, Camps and START Centers (Short Term Adolescent Residential Training Centers). They offer group counselling, work experience and other services designed to rehabilitate the young people referred to this program.

In addition, the division has sponsored and financed with 100 percent State funds, a 3-year demonstration Youth and Work Training program which is due to terminate at the end of the demonstration period, March 31, 1965. However, the Research component will be continuing beyond the termination of the action phase. Eight Youth and Work programs have been in operation, five of them in New York City and three upstate, one each in Buffalo, Syracuse and Rochester, to provide a variety of services to "unemployable school dropouts" with a view towards increasing their employability as well as to determine, among other things, what methods and techniques work for this particular group.

The division is also engaged in another experimental program which functions during the summer months and is designed to train young people for work with youth.

Mrs. Targ assured the conference group that she will carry back to her staff a greatly increased awareness of the role of the library in their work in relation to local communities.

CRITIQUE:

It has been our experience in working with the culturally deprived, multiproblem group in our population, that they generally do not seek out an agency and that, if we are to be of assistance, we must reach out to them

and work with them where they are. The terms aggressive casework, or outreach came into being as a result of the experiences of social workers and others in attempting to help these families and their children who we have found have been largely unmotivated insofar as seeking help for themselves is concerned.

Our experience in working with multiproblem families has also indicated that although we can be successful, this success is often of a very limited nature with which we must be content.

In all of your projects, make use of existing resources; i.e. in Nassau County there is a strong Health and Welfare Council which can be of assistance.

I would also urge you not to get lost in minutiae but to keep the large objectives of your program in mind. And insofar as individuals are concerned, use all the information already available from the different community resources. The disadvantaged have been "bothered" enough by surveyors, workers and researchers.

Harold Tucker, Chief Librarian, Queens Borough Public Library

Commented on similarities of the Nassau and Pioneer projects. Both are research projects; both involve systematic studies. Both require people with training in sociology. Both recognize existing programs or other agencies and provide for library involvement in existing programs. Both will develop a set of recommendations. Neither has a timetable on implementation, an estimate of man-hours needed or how many cases. Both expect to develop an action program from the studies.

The Nassau study is the broader of the two, including the handicapped. Statistics for alien groups are cited but no plan for serving such groups is indicated.

The disadvantaged in Nassau total only three or four percent. (The State figure is 8.7 percent.)

The equipment needs of the project are not spelled out nor are the surveys and questionnaires needed detailed.

The Pioneer project is in three parts - research, a pilot project and inservice training. The inservice training program is nebulous. Questions assurance of involvement of all agencies and the depth and duration of this training program.

Both Nassau and Pioneer projects need to be pinned down with concrete projects aimed at individuals. Both are described as supplementary and a resource to other agencies. It is possible that the library may be forced to assume more of a leadership role as an educational agency.

Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, Professor of Psychology, City College, New York

Described lifelong friendship with Arthur Schomburg who did not turn aside a small, inquiring boy who went "upstairs" to the special library seeking

escape from his peers in a school in Harlem. Over many years they shared a love of books and a love of people. There was never any rejection, any help offered condescendingly, no labeling as one of the "disadvantaged."

The disadvantaged do need nelp, but this help must be brought within the context of love, humanity and dignity of the person. For background reading, Dr. Clark suggested *Youth in the Ghetto*, Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, New York. Find a way to help without any subtle stigma, with no sense of superiority. Eighty-nine percent of youngsters in Harlem cannot read. Superfluous people are being spawned by schools. You cannot hope to attract those who cannot read and whose egos are threatened by sight of a book. Many might want to go to the library but with this assault on their egos, they have to try to escape. Programs should have to relate to this.

Can libraries find ways to entice youngsters in by offering something to compensate for this deficit? The library may be a place for tutoring, remedial reading, etc. to provide youngsters with reading "success." Music rooms can be a refuge where youngsters can get some kind of peace. Give children protection and inducements from ego assaults.

When asked how Dr. Clark chooses his staff, he replied that he first finds persons who care for people even if he must sacrifice some academic qualifications. It is not difficult to teach technical skills, but it is most difficult to teach empathy, respect for others which are essential to self-respect.

Dr. Norman D. Kurland, Director, Center of Innovation in Education, State Education Department

The center is concerned with integration as an educational value for children. All aspects of education can contribute to the achievement of integration from pupil assignment to curriculum content. Libraries can play a crucial role by being a source of information about all matters related to integration.

The center is also concerned with other innovations. There is increasing emphasis on independent study and on the access to information in the most usable form whether on the printed page, film, filmstrip, TV, audio tape or picture. Libraries need to keep pace with increased demands for information and with the methods by which it can be efficiently stored and retrieved. They can also help meet the needs of the nonreader and the slow reader by providing appropriate materials.

Harold S. Hacker, Director, Monroe County Library System

CRITIQUE:

Questioned as to how the Buffalo and Erie County project proposed to recruit participation in their Family Life program. Might be better to use advice in planning of the people themselves for whom program is planned.

On the New York Public Library project, Mr. Hacker suggested it might be better to concentrate on the regular library program up to a saturation point. Need to test effectiveness of materials and methods. We need outlets in informal places such as settlement houses, but as long as we place primary accent on books we are in trouble. Must use more films and records and provide equipment to use these materials if needed.

Mrs. Augusta Baker, Coordinator, Children's Services, Circulation Department, The New York Public Library

CRITIQUE:

Mrs. Baker has no question of the value of the Queens and Brooklyn projects dealing with preschoolers. These children need to be introduced to books. Will the projects reach the culturally deprived, however, or only the midway level? We must bring in the mothers from the street in order to reach their children. We need to select the 20 to go into the group and keep groups small.

Recommend that Queens and Brooklyn share their inservice training program. Both projects need trained staff members. Are we willing to pull good experienced staff out of the branches to carry out these programs? We should, and then use good volunteers in the various branch areas.

Meredith Bloss, Librarian, Free Public Library, New Haven, Connecticut

CRITIQUE:

Constructive criticism and comment heard from colleagues is a good sign that we are growing up. He has more questions than criticisms or answers.

What is saturation?
What is being sought? What hoped for?
Is it better to have training take place in a spot removed from the job?
Are we too wedded to the "book"?

Mr. Bloss agrees with Mike Sperdof in his article, "Romance with Poverty," in the *American Scholar* who says that our approach to these problems is piecemeal.

Brooklyn's plan for Community Coordinator is a sound, dramatic idea, but what does the coordinator learn that he can tell to the library? What is the feedback? How do these disadvantaged people feel about the library? What do they want?

Mr. Bloss questions the parent-children program although this sounds like a great idea. It requires sophistication to sit and listen to an authority. Would the mothers just prefer to "socialize"? Such socialization might develop an awareness of their needs both on our part as well as theirs.

To what extent are these projects based on what the people really want or to what extent on what we think they ought to want? A library should be

a friendly place where something might happen that could be fun. Where is the daring in these plans? There is no real breakthrough, no feedback, no sense of urgency and immediacy.

Dr. John H. Niemeyer, President, Bank Street College of Education, New York City

He is excited by the possibility that organized society should take the public library seriously enough so that it has hope of becoming the great educational institution that it has the potential of becoming.

The public school is expected to give the opportunity of education and even beyond that to educate not just to offer education. The same is true of libraries. We are working to open the doors to opportunity.

Bank Street College has had projects on innovation. We have been working with schools where achievement is low. One of the tasks relates to libraries and their cooperation with other agencies, especially schools. It is often difficult to obtain cooperation from schools. Libraries must seek cooperation from the schools.

The Bank Street College program reaches out to find the most disadvantaged students in fifth and sixth grades. We get permission from parents and guardians to send children to Bank Street College for one month. We have never failed to get an adult to carry through an obligation to a child - there is always an adult who cares. Parents need help and will respond to any teaching that helps them. Often this can be done through "role playing"- perhaps oral reading to a child.

A third Bank Street project involves working with PAL and JOIN and with volunteer students in developing materials.

There are four needs of children as regards this type of educational program:

1. A fresh approach - a nonauthoritarian approach

2. Acceptance and help for each child. Do not work with traditional presentation used in school, but enter the life of each child. Many children with this approach gain reading skills in just one month. The important thing in all these disadvantaged projects is empathy. Race of the child is unimportant.

3. Need for correct information. These disadvantaged young people are riddled with superstitions and false knowledge. Adolescent girls involved in teenage gangs have often had sexual intercourse, but know very little factual information about sex. We need new materials of many kinds - multiracial books, books relating to Negro history, books which enhance the self image of children.

4. Need to find interesting things to do for children. Schools are insufferably boring. Content should be more interesting.

Myra de H. Woodruff, Chief, Bureau of Child Development and Parent Education, State Education Department

My area of responsibility relates to the education of three-, four- and five-year-old children and to the education of their parents. I am delighted to know of the projects and plans for libraries to increase their programs for young children. Certainly there is a tremendous need for providing sound programs for young children from disadvantaged areas.

We need much help from children's librarians in locating good picture books for young children that help them in building an image of self worth. Particularly needed are books with good illustrations and very simple stories of various ethnic groups. It is a sad state of affairs when I find nursery school teachers coloring faces brown in the children's books because they can't find needed books with Negro children.

As we work with young children it is important that we all be aware of the research regarding ways young children learn. We need to know what are the normal developmental trends at age three, at age four and at age five. But in considering compensatory education for children in disadvantaged areas we all need to learn more about the special lacks arising from an impoverished environment. Does the child need help in developing visual perception and auditory perception? Does the child need help in knowing the names of the objects in his environment? Does he need a chance to develop verbal communication and the vocabulary involved? Does he need a chance to discover that wonderful things come from books? Does he need help in learning that there are many constructive ways of expressing his feelings?

What an opportunity we all have to study these children as we work with them in order that each of us can provide the best experiences possible.

May I salute the librarians in their undertaking!

SUMMARY OF REMARKS BY PRINCIPAL SPEAKERS

LIBRARY PARTICIPATION IN THE WAR ON POVERTY -

Henry T. Drennan, Coordinator of Public Library Service, Library Services Branch, U.S. Office of Education

There is a determination of the President and Congress that the stubborn conviction that poverty is inevitable can be eliminated by an all-out effort properly supported by federal funds. Education is the best tool to beat poverty. The Economic Opportunity Act and the 52 federal programs provide the armory to wage an all-out attack on poverty. There is a wide range of activities and an interrelatedness as well as provisions to involve the poor in the programs, not merely to help them. The *ALA Bulletin* for January 1965 (p.43-48) has a quick reference chart on federal legislative programs relevant to libraries. It is important that libraries avoid isolation in working with the disadvantaged. Know provisions of the various federal acts and know the community agencies or organization.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD -
Dr. Edmund W. Gordon, Chairman of Educational Psychology and Guidance, Yeshiva University

Dr. Gordon recommended as background reading Rosenblith, J. F. and Wesley Allinsmith, *Causes of Behavior: readings in child development and educational psychology*. Rockleigh, New Jersey: Allyn and Bacon, 1962.

Schools have failed to train the disadvantaged. They have not recognized the inhibiting effect on learning of low economic, social and employment conditions or of caste barriers. They emphasize the fact of the deficiencies rather than the kind of deficiencies. They have not developed techniques to prepare the disadvantaged to cope with a new society but rather attempt to prepare them for a world that no longer is.

Changes in our society work against the disadvantaged. There is a decreasing need for manual skills - no room for "strong back" success. At the same time there is increased need for trained minds.

Dr. Gordon suggested what can be done for these young people who come to school with other than conventional orientation. We should redefine our educational goals - shift from content mastery to continuing learning; train for the management of knowledge; focus on basic skills and develop techniques which follow the needs of society. These goals which may be appropriate for all pupils include:

1. Communication skills (speech, reading, writing, etc.) to replace manual skills
2. Competence in identifying and solving problems
3. Management of knowledge - first principles
4. Self management and interpersonal relations
5. Profitable use of leisure (continuing education and work centered self expression)

If we really try, there need not be "uneducatables." This task of serving the disadvantaged does not belong to schools or libraries alone, but to the entire community. We need to know these characteristics of the disadvantaged child:

1. Contradictory attitudes toward self and toward others, with low self concept and the resultant exaggerated positive and negative attitudes toward others prevalent

2. Utilitarian and materialistic attitudes, not unlike those which dominate in our society, but which, in the light of limited horizons and opportunities, function as depressants on motivation, aspiration and achievement

3. Low-level aspiration and motivation relative to academics and academic products, as well as in relation to some social norms

4. Low-level academic task orientation and variable levels of general task involvement

5. Styles and modes of perceptual habituation which do not complement the emphases which are important to traditional academic efficiency

6. Weaknesses in the utilization of traditional abstract symbols and dominant group language forms to interpret and communicate

7. Weaknesses in the utilization of abstractions with a marked tendency to favor concrete, stimulus-bound cognitive processes

8. Marked socio-cultural patterns in their conditions of life which tend to be noncomplementary to traditional standards of academic achievement and social stability, these include hypermobility, family instability, distorted model relationships, economic insufficiency, housing inadequacy, repeated subjection to discriminatory treatment, as well as forced separation from many of the main channels of our society

Even fewer attempts have been made at identifying some of the positive characteristics of socially disadvantaged children. However, among these the following have been observed:

1. Selective motivation, creativity and proficiency

2. Complex symbolization reflected in ingroup language forms and ritual behavior

3. Functional computational skills

4. Accuracy of perception and generalization around some social, psychological and physical phenomena

5. Selective recall, association and generalization

6. Capacity for meaningful and loyal personal relationships

7. Capacity for meaningful and sustained selective task involvement

8. Ingeniousness and resourcefulness in the pursuit of self selected goals and in coping with the difficult conditions of life peculiar to states of economic insufficiency and poverty; low social class status; and low racial-caste status

SERVICE TO THE DISADVANTAGED - Powerhouse or Pacifier?[1]

Dr. Dan W. Dodson, Director, Center for Human Relations and Community Studies, New York University

I have been puttering around in the environs of New York City as an alleged sociologist now for about 28 years. Whatever insights I may have will be a result of that experience. We run a center that has been in operation since 1947, designed to train people to work on problems of intergroup relations, do some research and some consultation. Much time is spent meeting with different groups in different places. This poverty business is about to kill us!

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1 This speech by Dr. Dodson was printed in the March 1965 issue of *The Bookmark*. Reprints are available from the Library Extension Division.

We have had the chance, of course, to participate in the great social movements and the changing psychological moods of people beginning with the close of the war. We had the experience of the Bureau of Intercultural Education, which helped to establish us in the University. We have studied the attitudes and values of groups toward each other as they come to the great encounters with each other in these great metropolitan environments. This has been an exciting and rewarding undertaking.

A great portion of our time has been spent in the more recent years with the problems of de facto segregation, in education, in residential living and in community affairs in general. Out of this identity and involvement with problems have come studies: the New Rochelle racial imbalance problems, the Englewood, and the Orange, New Jersey, and more recently the Mount Vernon, New York study of last spring. These, of course, focused attention on problems of the total community and the total situation and how agencies orchestrate their resources to better meet needs in changing neighborhood areas. We also focused on some more concrete problems. The conscience of the country has certainly been pricked by the dramatic efforts that are being made by the government's attention on the problems of poverty.

Sometimes I think we see them a little bit out of perspective. The great movement from rural places to the cities has been, of course, the dramatic thing in our lifetime. In the time of the development of the reaper, it took 56 hours to plant, and harvest an acre of wheat and it is done better today in 2 hours' time. It took 146 hours to produce 100 bushels of corn which is done today in 4 hours' time. Since 1950, in these last 14 years, they have cut the amount of feed that is required to produce a pound of flesh on a chicken from 2½ pounds to 2 pounds. In other words, they have cut it by 20 percent. This alone has brought about the international hassle with Germany over tariffs. Twenty-five years ago it took one person to tend 10,000 fowls. Today one person can handle equally well 40,000. These developments have caused a tremendous expulsive population force. People have moved from rural to urban places.

The cities have always been the great civilizing force in cultures. They brought the poor and the humble, the despised and the outcast, the uneducated, the uncouth to the great encounters and in one or two generations produced out of them urbane, humane people. This has been the function, the role, of the city in history. This process is unfolding before our eyes here. The big problem, it seems to me, is the extent of the problem in so short a period of time. There are a million more people living in the slums of our large cities then live on all the farms, and a million more to come. The history of civilization also is that they have attracted the marginal, but choked them down because they found it easier to keep these people amused than to integrate them purposefully into the life of the community. Ultimately, bread and circuses produced such attrition of resource that the civilization fell of its own weight.

Today we are in the great throes of testing whether we're going to integrate this new migration from the farms and the Appalachias purposefully into these great urban centers or not. Many are becoming tremendously concerned because we've now gone through the third generation of people who are

reared on welfare and there is the possibility we are developing a culture of poverty in which we will maintain permanently a kept people in these concentrated urban environs.

I believe that the biggest issue with which we are dealing is the sense of apathy that stems from a feeling of being powerless in these great urban concentrations. I believe that Adler was only half right in his psychology that a person who feels compromised in his potency, overcompensates. He also resigns in apathy and I believe that the problem we are dealing with is the pervasive sense of powerlessness which produces apathy. The testing point is how to deal with this.

The dominant group, the power order, in the society has always made characteristic approaches to the powerless. This was to get the bright ones involved, alienate them in their sentiments and sympathies from the group of which they are a part, make them ashamed of their heritage. Every nationality group has had to wrestle with the problem of group self-hate in its second generation youth, to get them to take stock in the mythology of the American dream - that every person will be rewarded according to his initiative and his ability, and ultimately when these bright ones are sandpapered sufficiently to the dimensions of the power order they are transmuted into what, in quotes, you would call "ideal Americans." This is the siphoning off process. It left the group itself to stew in its own problems; hence the slum is an institutionalized pattern of every city. It is testimony to the fact that we never solve the problem of the slum, we always are siphoning off the bright ones.

This process works as long as there is enough escalation upwards, that people can feel that even though they may not make it, if they will work hard enough and give their children a chance, their children will make it. This has been the great hope that made life bearable for many people who have made inordinant sacrifices for their children.

Whether there is time enough for this integrative process or whether there is an alternate to it, I think, is a great issue. The alternate to it would be for the group itself to take power, not have it given to them (you can't give them power, power has to be taken); to run the risk of making its mistakes and come back to find the ways of improving itself to deal with its problems - but ultimately to force the power order of the society to make a place for it and to share power in communal decision making. In the involvement and the participation this produced (what we sometimes refer to as having to earn for yourself your right), people have to then learn how to handle themselves purposively, hence out of it comes the search for the kind of education that is necessary. It is said that in many instances following the Civil War when the Negroes felt that they were going to join with the whites in building the new order in the South, that there was the greatest upsurge of learning in the Negro group, that they tied their Bibles between their plow handles to learn to read while they were working, in order to prepare themselves. Reconstruction blotted this out and brought the kind of apathy we are dealing with now.

The thing I fear most, with us as people who are in a sense the surrogates of the power order, is that we are mortgaged to this integrative process of the

"siphoning off" versus the other because the other involves conflict and we do not want to get involved in that by and large. We are not sensitive to the things that represent the raw meat of these problems. Let me be a little more specific. I reviewed critically Passow's book, *Education in Depressed Areas*, for the *Saturday Review*. Not that it was not a good book (it is the best compilation of this material from the learned scholars that I know), but all of us in the helping-profession have as our major job the providing of the rationalizations as to why the power order is what it is and why it deserves to stay as it is and why those who are not in it, are not. This is our job.

The historian's job is to continuously reinterpret history, to interpret the shifts of power order. When America was a protestant country, history was protestant history. As Catholics have gained power it became a Christian history and as the Jews are now getting a toehold, it is becoming our common Hebraic-Christian tradition. History is reinterpretation of power arrangements. At the middle of the last century, the learned divine figured why you could not get creativity out of certain people - God had damned them before birth and this provided a perfect excuse as to why it was not man's fault; it was God's fault for this lack of creativeness in some. By the end of the century the psychologists had come up with a secular version of it which was a low IQ. And it means about the same thing.

Very rapidly the sociologists among us are coming up with ours, which is low social class. When you wade through our contributions such as this Passow book provides, of "low IQ," "low social class," "weak ego strength," "lack of father image with which to relate," "inability to forego immediate pleasures for long-range goals," "cultural deprivation," "matriarchial domination" (I'd like to know which of us aren't under that) and all these cliches, you wonder if the culturally deprived and disadvantaged may not have as his hardest job that of beating down the mythologies which scholars create about him. If a person ever had any notion of the human potential and he took these things seriously, he would have pictures in the back of his head when he got through that would make it impossible for him to work with them. When you are through, you feel like saying, "If this is all we see in the human potential then we had better call the Muslims and turn them over to them"; because when they are through with them and they get a dose of their ideologies they become rather imaginative people. Those low IQ's do not seem to make too much difference. Low social class does not seem to get in the way. Instead of inability to forego immediate pleasures, they seem remarkably disciplined people, and give the lie to the notion that the limitation is in the human potential. The problem is in what we see in the material with which we work. The scholars have their responsibility for providing the rationalizations of the power order as to why it operates the way it does.

Now, on these library services projects you are designing, I agree with you that research is necessary, but how much direction has research given us for what we need to do? As to research and all the work on IQ, - I don't believe really that the discovery of the IQ has helped very much in lifting the horizons of kids and getting them to aspire to vistas on the horizons. It has been a limiting factor in itself. It set perimeters beyond which people were not expected to go. It gives the schools a sorting

machine operation of pigeon-holes to put people in. Is it research and factfinding geared to policy determination of how better to operate? But operate to what end? The power order operates a whole lot like the British in dealing with some of their colonies; when there was tension the British found that the best way to control it was just to squirt on a little more welfare so that it kept people sufficiently tranquilized in Egypt that they wouldn't launch out to seek the promised land.

Are our services simply the squirting on of more welfare? Does our interest stem simply from the concern that we must keep the tension controlled with a little more and so on, or is it to release the human potential? If it is to release the human potential, we must run some calculated risk. If people are going to take power and move from self-direction, out of this will come the need for the library to service some movements that are going to be autonomous in themselves and not simply programs of service of welfare agencies, that get together and coordinate and wrap up their services in a cartel kind of arrangement. In other words, the biggest issue we are dealing with is not the issue of more service, as important as this is, but of some undergirding ideology that gives life structure and meaning and purpose. One that moves people towards some autonomous goals which cause them to fight back and not be willing quite so rapidly to surrender their potency. In this, where do we stand as an institution of service to the community? Are we committed to helping all people to pursue these autonomous kinds of goals or are we there as representatives also of the power order to serve sufficiently well that we keep people tranquilized?

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